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<p>Tiivistelmä-Referat-Abstract</p> <p>This is the first Finnish dissertation dealing with automobility. The work includes three themes: 1) urbanity and sociability of taxi driver and his (or her) fare, 2) experienced urban traffic by different traffic modes, and 3) Finnish car ads in magazines and newspapers. Common to these three is impersonality that is only time to time changed in a more mutual-like sphere.</p> <p>Instead of studying automobility as a problem of environment, society, or traffic safety, it is studied from the perspective of how “social” is experienced in normally so technologically and administratively defined urban automobility and traffic.</p> <p>Data: beside general statistics, participant observation, tens of single and group interviews, and 700 Finnish car ads.</p> <p>The main argument is, that although urban traffic is thought to be an unsocial phenomenon, it is highly social – it is only impersonal in its nature. Furthermore, impersonality and indifferent attitude is a carrying force of sociality in traffic. The personal mental and spatial distance to others is maintained carefully and skillfully while ‘route-negotiating’ through encounters. Instead of ‘behaving’, people in traffic should be considered as ‘actors’ who construct traffic all the time by their interpretations.</p> <p>The ‘urbanity’ of taxi can be explained followingly: the urban phenomenon of mixture of mental distance and spatial closure is highly experienced in the semipublicness of the taxi ride.</p> <p>The content of the Finnish car ads – lists of features of the car model, and hidden referring to social comparison – has not changed during the last 100 years. Only people and especially usual users have been vanished gradually during the last decades.</p> <p>Traffic can be studied as Durkheimian negative and positive ritual. (Too selfish) personal desires are to be avoided and others are, situationally, to be taken into account. Also people themselves in traffic evaluate themselves and other participants based on social criteria: others are seen as 1) normals (=similar to oneself), as 2) exceptionally advanced (some, but not all, professional drivers, police etc.), and those qualified with more or less bad habits. The last category is the most important tool in defining one’s own style or taste of traffic.</p>			
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